

what we can do to end these horrible crimes.

In the past 40 years, our Nation has struggled to address some of our society's worst ills: child abuse and domestic violence. Now we must confront elder abuse.

For the past 25 years, Congress has held hearings on the devastating effects of elder abuse, yet we have taken no comprehensive action. Abuse of the elderly is nothing new, but as our Nation has aged and the baby boom generation stands on the cusp of retirement, the prevalence of elder abuse will only get worse. The time to act is now. We can no longer ignore or tolerate the shame and scandal of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of our Nation's seniors.

I have long made ending elder abuse a top priority. I worked hard to develop a national criminal background check system for nursing home, home health, and other long-term care employees. While the vast majority of these employees are diligent, dedicated, and professional, it is too easy for people with abusive and criminal backgrounds to find work in long-term care. This is unacceptable. Today, seven States, including my home State of Wisconsin, are engaged in a pilot project based on my legislation which requires long-term care employers to run FBI criminal background checks on potential employees before they are hired and trusted to care for our loved ones. My hope is that upon completion of this pilot project, we will move to a national criminal background check system and protect seniors in all 50 States.

I am also a proud original cosponsor of the Elder Justice Act, which takes a number of steps to prevent and treat elder abuse. It will improve prevention and intervention by funding State and local projects that keep older Americans safe. It will ensure that health officials, social services, law enforcement, long-term care facilities, consumer advocates, and families are all working together to confront this problem; and, it will establish training programs so health professionals in both forensic pathology and geriatrics can better detect elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Finally, the bill will establish victim assistance programs, create "safe havens" for seniors in dangerous living situations, and help train law enforcement officers to prioritize and investigate cases of elder abuse.

Researchers have warned us that the reported cases of elder abuse might only be the tip of the iceberg; that is why World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is so important. We must spread the word: elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation is occurring every day and, if left unchecked, will only grow more prevalent. As I continue my efforts here in the Senate, I encourage my colleagues and Americans everywhere to join me in putting an end to this terrible scourge of elder abuse.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### HONORING 17 OUTSTANDING HOOSIER DADS

• Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, it is my privilege today to pay tribute to 17 Hoosier men whose outstanding commitment to fatherhood serves as example of how responsible, involved dads can promote stronger families and raise exceptional children.

This year, I invited Hoosier children to pay tribute to their dads by writing essays about what makes their father an Outstanding Hoosier Dad.

In a nation that leads the world in absentee fatherhood, it is particularly important this Father's Day to recognize outstanding dads who are doing their part to raise bright, healthy children. Children whose fathers are absent are five times more likely to live in poverty and twice as likely to commit a crime, drop out of school or become substance abusers. The essays provided a touching reminder to all men of the impact they have when they play an active role in their children's lives.

It is an honor today to recognize the 17 Hoosier children who submitted essays and their outstanding dads by reading their names into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of the United States.

R. Bradley Allen, father of John Allen, South Bend  
 Ronnie Asher, father of Jessica Asher, Martinsville  
 Brian Bolsen, father of Brennan Bolsen, Chesterton  
 Neil Day, father of Adam Day, Fort Wayne  
 Chris Dixon, father of William Dixon, Bloomington  
 Kevin Ford, father of Kimberly Ford, Schererville  
 Jeff Gratz, father of Clare Gratz, Batesville  
 Tom Gutzwiller, father of Lawson Gutzwiller, Batesville  
 Samuel Hale, father of Greg Hale, Granger  
 Dennis Mansfield, father of Alison Mansfield, Fort Wayne  
 Matt McKaig, father of Caleb McKaig, Urbana  
 Jonathan Plucker, father of Paige Plucker, Bloomington  
 Frederick Richards, father of Corey Richards, Churubusco  
 Andy Schultz, father of Mary Kate Schultz, DeMotte  
 Mike Stefanski, father of Matthew Stefanski, Valparaiso  
 Amitav Thamba, father of Aish Thamba, Fishers  
 Wiley Traylor, father of Stephanie Traylor, Mooresville•

### IN HONOR OF GEORGE WINGATE HIGH SCHOOL

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to honor George Wingate High School in Brooklyn, NY. Wingate High School, my alma mater, will graduate its last class on June 27, 2006.

In 1954, Wingate High School accepted its first class of students and had its first graduating class in 1957. It was the first high school built in New York after the end of World War II, and it embodied many of the ideals of the

baby boomer generation. Wingate High School was so different from the standard design plan for schools that it became known as "The Banjo School" because of its open design.

Wingate High School was also innovative in its approach to teaching. Instead of focusing strictly on academic classes, Wingate was one of the first high schools in the Nation to offer a comprehensive range of classes in vocational, commercial and academic fields. Wingate High School has been known for its outstanding aviation, culinary arts, nursing and law programs, and many of its students have gone on to become successful pilots, chefs, nurses and attorneys.

Wingate has had a few famous graduates such as former New York State senator and current Brooklyn Borough president, Marty Markowitz, and Roger Brown, a New York City playground legend who went on to greatness in the American Basketball Association. However, thousands of other Wingate graduates have made priceless contributions to their communities, in part because of the valuable lessons they learned there.

I firmly believe that a quality education is the key to our youths' success and our nation's future. I commend Wingate's teachers, faculty, staff, and volunteers for their many years of hard work and dedication to Wingate High School's students. Their work has resulted in thousands of students who are better prepared to face the world and its challenges. I commend them for their commitment to quality education. Their enthusiasm and love of teaching means a brighter future for all of our children.

Wingate High School's motto is: "Ad Astra per Ardua"—"To the stars through struggle." In its 52-year history, George Wingate High School has graduated thousands of students who have gone on to make the world a better place. Though the journey has not always been easy, I know that Wingate's 2006 graduates will go on to do great things.

I give my most sincere congratulations and best wishes for the future to Wingate High School's Class of 2006.●

### NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

• Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the National History Day program. A basic knowledge of history is essential for our Nation's children to become active participants in our democracy, and National History Day is promoting history education in Minnesota and throughout the Nation. National History Day empowers teachers to improve history education so that every student will have historical knowledge and skills to contribute to the public good of our Nation. The National History Day program also allows students to create exhibits, documentaries and performances, by using their critical thinking and research skills in the subject of history.